



Office of the Archbishop
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August 17, 2021

Dear Brothers,

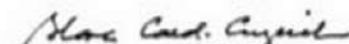
During my vicariate meetings with the priests, I was told that some parishioners are asking their pastors to provide or sign a document testifying that their refusal to be vaccinated against the Covid virus is supported by the teaching of the Catholic Church. I do know that some bishops individually or by state have provided templates for such a declaration, even though there is no basis in Catholic moral teaching for rejecting vaccine mandates on religious grounds.

In fact, the Holy See has clearly stated that receiving the Covid vaccine is unquestionably in keeping with Catholic faith, and even has urged people to be vaccinated as an act of charity and out of respect for the common good in fighting the pandemic. Our moral teaching, while ever respectful of the rights of individuals, always keeps in focus the common good. Not doing so distorts Catholic doctrine.

Therefore, if you are asked to offer such testimony, please politely decline and explain that doing so would mean that you would be endorsing something that is not in keeping with Catholic teaching. Parishioners surely can determine their own actions, but it would be important to clarify that they cannot use the teaching of the church to justify such decisions, which in their essence, are a rejection of the church's authentic moral teaching regarding Covid vaccines.

This letter gives me the opportunity once again to thank you for your extraordinary service to God's People and assure you of my closeness to you in this time of the pandemic, filled with great challenges but also God's abundant grace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago